

# Christmas Bulletin 2018

## Standing up for Mid Norfolk!

### REAL PROGRESS ON LOCAL ISSUES

- **Launching the inaugural Norfolk Enterprise festival**
  - Norfolk is home to thousands of small local businesses. For too long this community has been hidden away in bedrooms, industrial estates and old farm buildings, with insufficient voice in our national and local government.
  - The people who ‘have a go’ and start a new venture – whether business or community project – are the heroes of our County.
  - That’s why I co-founded the first NorfolkWay Enterprise Festival at Westacre Theatre in September. Approximately 500 people attended on a chilly and wet afternoon but that did not stop the enthusiasm – and the event will be taking place again in 2019. ([See More Here](#))



- **Standing up for Norfolk villages facing a massive Power Station development**

- National Infrastructure Projects are vital for our local economy, jobs, and the provisions available.
- However, if these are to be implemented, they require sufficient amounts of infrastructure to support them and local people affected, have the right to be consulted.
- That is why I have led the campaign with Necton and five surrounding villages, to fight for a proper location and proper local compensation. ([See More Here](#))

- **Fighting for a new approach to planning**

- Large companies continue to exploit the loopholes in our planning law.
- Yes, we need housing, but NOT at any cost and not without infrastructure.
- Mid Norfolk villages deserve a voice. That’s why I have been working with the Minister of State for Housing, District Councils, and Parish Councils, across my patch to secure vital reforms to the planning system and ensure our towns and villages are always fairly treated and respected. ([See More Here](#))

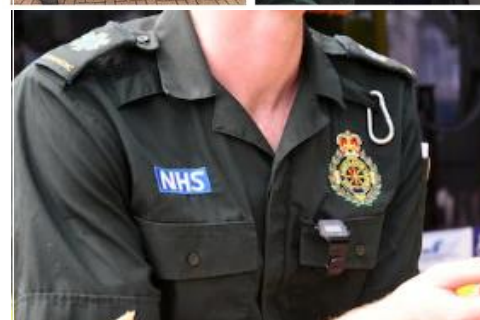
- **Supporting dedicated public servants on the front line – Norfolk Ambulance service**

- Our frontline Ambulance Staff face significant challenges all year round. But especially in winter.
- The local Ambulance Trust has had some difficult management issues locally.
- That's why I went to experience first-hand, and support great men and women on the frontline for us, 24:7. **Thank you for all you do for us!** ([See More Here](#))



- **Providing full access for Wymondham rail station**

- For far too long Norfolk has seen its transport infrastructure neglected. I'm proud to have helped secure the £300m for the A47 and £500m for the A11 and new trains. But our rail stations matter too. It is unacceptable in this day and age for ANY railway station to have an inaccessible platform.
- That's why I continue to lead the campaign to improve access to Platform 2 of Wymondham Station.
- By working with Network Rail, Abellio Greater Anglia, South Norfolk Council officers and local councillors, initial designs for a ramp and drop-off point have been produced, and I look forward to continuing my work with these parties raise the funds required to get the job done. ([See More](#))



- **Delivering for Dereham Bowls Club**

- Our market towns and villages are the backbone of our rural way of life, and the various clubs and societies within them play a vital part in fostering the great sense of community.
- That's why I was concerned to learn, last year, that St Nicholas' Bowls Club, right in the centre of Dereham, was facing an uncertain future – with its lease coming up for renewal with Breckland.
- I was pleased to work with the Chairman of the Bowls Club, Raymond Worby, and his team to encourage Breckland to give them the certainty they needed – and I am delighted that the Club have now signed a new lease which gives them exactly that.
- The Club has one of the best greens around, as well as a thriving membership and ambitions to improve even further. Go along and have a go. It's fun for **all** the family! ([See More Here](#)).





• **Supporting Town and Village Plans**

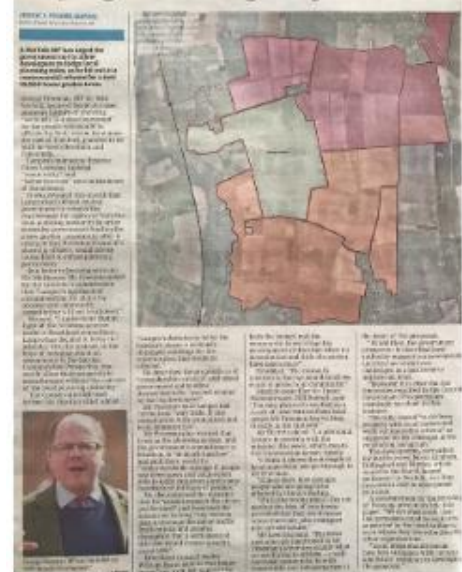
- With pressure from big national housing developers, it's crucial that communities develop their own Neighbourhood Plans – to give them greater protection from aggressive out-of-town developers.
- That's why I have been working so closely with **Attleborough, Watton and Dereham councils** to support Partnerships that will oversee their Town Plans and bring the wider community together to deliver local priority infrastructure and projects.
- I'm also continuing to fight in Westminster for local planning reforms. ([See More Here](#))
- In early December, I convened a meeting with the Housing and Planning Minister, Breckland Council, and the Chairman and Clerk of Swanton Morley Parish Council, to push for key reforms. ([See More Here](#))
- Last year I resigned from the Government to push for reforms – not least to our planning system, as I pledged to at the last election.
- I will continue the fight.



• **Current plans (click on each village to see the work currently being done in your area).**

- [Mattishall](#)
- [Old Buckenham](#)
- [Saham Toney](#)
- [Great Ellingham](#)
- [Watton](#)
- [Dereham](#)
- [Attleborough](#)
- [Rocklands](#)

**Garden town developers showing 'ill-judged contempt' says MP**



- **Inspiring the next generation**

- Too many of our young people feel under-represented, without a voice and insecure in a difficult world.
- It is vital that politicians connect with this generation, so we can listen, inspire and help them.
- This is why every week I try and I visit a local school. It's also why I've set up the Accelerate East Programme and The Breckland 4 Jobs which helps young people access jobs, Apprentices and work experience. **(See More [Here](#)).**
- My recent visits include **[Litcham High](#), [Hingham Primary](#), and [Attleborough Sixth Form](#).**



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- **Feline Friends - Cats home**

- It is at this time of the year in which sadly too many cats are left without a home. It's important that there are places to which owners can turn should they be unable to care for their pet.
- The Cats Protection Dereham Adoption Branch (based at Longham), is doing brilliant work.
- Click [HERE](#) to see what they do.



- **Supporting Norfolk's local farmers in post-Brexit Britain**

- Norfolk's food and farming sector is key to our local economy.
- As we look to leave the European Union, it's vital that they continue to thrive.
- This is why I have continue to take the time to not only to speak with many across the sector in Mid Norfolk, but also to speak up for them in relation to the Government's recent Agriculture Bill.

**[\(See More Here\)](#)**





## Health ministers and politicians visit brain tumour research labs

UK health ministers shared the news of an upcoming funding boost to brain tumour research, during a visit to laboratories at Queen Mary University of London this week.

### • Modernising Norfolk Broadband and mobile connectivity

- For Norfolk to achieve its economic potential, communities and businesses **must** be able to rely on fast broadband and mobile coverage fit for the 21st century.
- That's why I am pleased that superfast broadband coverage in Norfolk has gone up from 87% to 95% by 2020. **(See More Here).**
- I'm delighted that my suggestion of a **voucher scheme** for most rural communities has been implemented by the Government. **(See More Here)**

### • Accelerated Access to new treatments for NHS patients

- Unfortunately, not all cancers get the necessary funding to find new cures.
- Due to the tragic loss of Dame Tessa Jowell, recently brain cancer has received significant public attention through the media. **(See More Here)**
- I am very proud that when Health Minister I secured £45 million investment for brain cancer and Accelerated Access treatments for all cancer patients, improving diagnosis at an earlier stage. **(See More Here).**



### Supporting our High Streets

- For too long our local High Streets have been suffering. Vibrant Towns need buzzing High Streets.
- That's why I have been working with local councillors and community representatives to breathe fresh life into the **Wymondham** Friday Market, to ensure that **Watton** gets a new permanent Post Office branch and support **Dereham** and **Attleborough** Town Centre Plans.
- I'm delighted that **Wymondham** Friday Market is now almost at full capacity, and that **Watton's** new Post Office has found a home at Edwards' Newsagent – due to open in early 2019. (Post Office Ltd have assured me that they will deliver a full service during this Festive period).



- **Celebrating 100 years of Women's Suffrage**

- This year saw the hundred year anniversary of Women's Suffrage.
- 100 years ago my Great Aunt Mabel was the first British Conservative MP in Parliament.
- That's why I was incredibly honoured to not only be involved in local events around the constituency, but also in Westminster where I took part in the debate and various events promoting future female generations involvement in politics as a whole. **(See More Here).**



- **Delivering the A47. Finally.**

- The A47 has been neglected for **decades.**
- That's why I delighted to get the £300 Million funding for the Mid Norfolk section. **(See More Here).**
- But 4 years on, work is only just starting!
- Local commuters, business and companies need better. I will continue to help the A47 Alliance. **(See More Here).**



### Backing our local sports clubs

- Sports clubs are a massive part of any thriving community, especially here in Norfolk.
- That is why I am delighted to see the fantastic investment at Wymondham Rugby Club's new home at Barnard Fields.
- I look forward to following this great Club's progress throughout the season.
- And to all the sports teams in Mid Norfolk, keep doing our patch proud. If there is anything I can do to help with your sports teams and clubs, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me and my local office. **(See More Here)**



### Jobs saved at Banham Poultry as deal is struck with chicken producer



### Saving Crucial Local Jobs

- In September, Banham Poultry announced they were struggling to find a new buyer for the company, putting over 2,000 local jobs at risk.
- After lobbying Ministers, stakeholders and interested parties in a bid to broker a deal, it was a huge relief for those employees that an agreement was struck securing the future of over 2,000 jobs.
- Key local businesses like Banham Poultry are mainstays of the local economy and community, and provide the much needed employment and skills to local residents and future generations. That's why I will always step in, if I can, on behalf of my constituents when jobs are threatened. [\(See More Here\)](#)

### Backing Local Businesses

- Having run my own small business for over fifteen years before becoming your MP, I know just how important local businesses are to both our local and national economy.
- That's why I always relish the opportunity to visit local businesses, whether big or small, and why I was delighted to discover world class Mirus Aircraft Seating in Hingham.
- Mirus are further evidence that Mid Norfolk is home to thousands of exciting businesses with huge growth potential. I remain firmly committed to working with all local business to provide the support they need to flourish. [\(See More Here\)](#)



### Remembering the fallen heroes of 1914-18

- This November. We remembered those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our Country, and County.
- As we look back a hundred years since the First World War, it is important to reflect on their sacrifice, and the duty I believe we owe them to leave our world better than we found it.
- I was incredibly proud to attend the Remembrance Sunday Parade in Dereham, and not only to be surrounded by those who have fought for their Country, but also the significant number of younger people who came to show their respect. It falls to us all to keep the legacy of those who have fallen, alive, lest we forget. [\(See More Here\)](#)

# Westminster – Taking the fight for Mid Norfolk to the heart of Government

## Championing Norfolk issues in Parliament

- For too long, Norfolk has been treated as a backwater and the issues we face day-to-day in Mid Norfolk can all too easily be overlooked by civil servants in Whitehall and Westminster.
- Since 2010, my priority has always been to ensure that Mid Norfolk has a strong voice.
- That is why on issues such as **planning reform, mental health provision** and funding for better **infrastructure** in Mid Norfolk, I will continue to speak up and raise, until we get the change we need. ([See More Here](#))



- **Campaigning for better cross-party politics – The BigTent Ideas Festival 2018**

- Politics is in a terrible state.
- Tribal party battles, personal attacks, and depressing divisions are deepening disillusionment.
- That's why I set up the non-party Big Tent Ideas Festival.
- The Big Tent looks to create and harness a movement of change, reform, opportunity, empowerment, responsibility and a renewed sense of active citizenship.
- We do not claim to have all the answers, but we hope to at least ask the right questions. Of the right people. In the right forum. In the right spirit. ([See More Here](#))





## And we caught the imagination...

### Evening Standard.

I was struck by how refreshing it felt to be at a serious political event, debating policies with honesty and good faith and not just yelling mindlessly about tribe or culture. My take away from the festival — apart from a cracking paneer wrap — was that ideas still matter in politics and that despite all this talk of a centrist party, there are still fundamental differences between what the two big parties believe in.

Met @JohnnyMercerUK on Saturday at @BigTentIdeas and 4 days I am in Whitehall meeting him and talking about the work to help #endFGM. When you ask me why I rate Tories it's because they care and take action.

Thank you to everyone who took part in this amazing and inspirational event. And congratulations to @GeorgeFreemanMP @dollytheis and the team for making it happen. #BigTentIdeasFest

**The Economist** Britain is seeing a resurgence of interest in political ideas STUCK in the middle of the fens outside Cambridge, the Babraham Research Campus is a nightmare to get to. Yet on September 8th, 1,500 people braved challenging logistics and intermittent rain to spend a day in eight makeshift tents there to discuss political ideas. Is this the end of the liberal era? Can we forge a new national consensus in the aftermath of Brexit? How can we use the great thinkers of the past to solve today's problems? The festival is the brainchild of George Freeman, a Tory politician. Although the speakers and the audience tilted right, the participants included a smattering of left-leaning grandees and activists. "It's nice to come to a political meeting where people aren't spitting at you," said a Labour moderate.

Today I'm delighted to share our latest report @BigTentIdeas: 19 disruptive ideas to tackle public policy challenges - from social care to local government finance to prisons to what do you think?

**BBC NEWS** Big Tent Ideas Festival: Ellie Mae O'Hagan on centrism

Politics Live reporter Greg Dawson decided to take the writer, Ellie Mae O'Hagan, along to a politics festival organised by a Conservative MP.

The Jeremy Corbyn supporter, was cynical ahead of the event where she met Conservative MPs Justine Greening and George Freeman.

The Big Tent Ideas Festival was designed to appeal to non-politicians and looks towards reviving centrism.

Last Saturday was a great, great day... Looking forward to hearing from @BigTentIdeas & @Capital\_Ideas\_F on what's next for #BigTentIdeasFest...

### UK MP Tweets

The account mentioned most by MPs today was @BigTentIdeas 08/09/2018, 14:21

I had a great time @BigTentIdeas - invigorating to be part of it and hear so much new thinking about the big challenges we face. Congratulations to all involved in making it happen, especially @GeorgeFreemanMP.

Fed up with a politics that doesn't speak for you? Passionate about having a say on the big issues of our times, but don't want to join a party? Me too. The #BigTentIdeasFest on Sept 8 is for us. Join me in supporting @BigTentIdeas: book your ticket here:

### Policy Exchange

Amazing to see another totally packed tent to debate what we can learn from great thinkers & leaders of the past - people standing at the back & sitting on the grass all down the sides! Thank you to everyone who's joined us at @BigTentIdeas today

Ideas, debate and discussion aplenty @BigTentIdeas - loving it. Packed tents, feisty debate and limited politics - ECONOMY + SOCIETY + POLITICS + HOSES AND FEARS + GLOBAL BRITAIN + TECHNOLOGY + INNOVATION + ARTS AND CULTURE

Great day at the #BigTentIdeasFest - thanks @GeorgeFreemanMP. Britain has never been a country with equality of opportunity. I believe it's time to change that. #SocialMobility @thesmpledge

Amazing to see the Big Ideas Tent Festival in its second year with over a thousand attendees. Congrats to the @BigTentIdeas team for making it happen again. It was a blast!

### New politics 'festival' underway in Cambridge

A new festival in Cambridge will give people talking about issues affecting the country.

Reflecting on @BigTentIdeas and the fantastic discussions and ideas in fruition. So much @conservative talent on display providing a vision for our post-Brexit future incl @Nus\_Ghani @JohnnyMercerUK @ioWBobSeely @Tobias\_Ellwood @JamesCleverly and more! Thanks @GeorgeFreemanMP

### Robert Peston

Absolutely bonkers and sad that Labour MPs were banned by party's leadership from attending @BigTentIdeas. It was not party political. Just fun, fizzing with ideas and about encouraging political engagement. We need more intelligent cross party debate not silos

### The Guardian

#### 'You can have a voice': political festivals on the rise in UK

The vision behind the Big Tent Ideas festival, brainchild of the Tory MP George Freeman, was to connect the party with young people and build a centre-right movement to propel it forward. One year on, however, the festival has returned with a new strategy.

"It's totally different. I have made it non-party political so that MPs, peers and others from the centre left can also get involved," said Freeman. The event, he added, was part of a wider initiative to travel the country announcing bursaries for entrepreneurs with the most radical ideas.

Saturday's gatherings inside eight tents at Babraham Research Campus in Cambridge, with speakers on topics ranging from "Tax and State" to "Millennials - Maybe They Are More Libertarian Than We Think?", reflect a growing appetite for "political festivalism".

### Peter Kyle MP

The @BigTentIdeas is a really welcome addition to the conference season.

At party conferences we talk to ourselves, so kicking the season off by inviting "everyone" in to see debate between parties and with independent experts (yes, they're welcome) is a really interesting

### sky news

By Aubrey Allegretti, political reporter

Sky's Aubrey Allegretti says the message of "more in common" was the overriding hope behind a political "festival of ideas".

But it was a former Labour MP, Jo Cox, whose words were quoted most widely.

Her phrase "more in common" resounded in every quarter of the Big Tent Festival Of Ideas, an outdoor conference in Cambridge.

The speakers included Liz Truss, chief secretary to the Treasury; Harriet Harman, a veteran Labour MP, and Norman Lamb, the former Lib Dem health minister who still sits in parliament.

If it can retain its non-combative, free-flowing, free-thinking atmosphere, the Big Tent Festival Of Ideas will be the antidote to the PM's poison.

Where everyone comes together to discuss ideas - from capitalism to culture - without having to sit in one camp or the other.

### Demos

Packed tent for our first session this morning at @BigTentIdeas! @peterkyle @pollymackenzie and @DanielJHannan discussing how we rebuild a sense of optimism and move forward from division #bigtentfest

### Rwanda in UK

This afternoon, High Commissioner @YKaritanyi will speak on the panel on "Global People Movement: Addressing migration, refugees and human trafficking", in the #GlobalBritain tent at the @BigTentIdeas Festival. #BigTentIdeasFest

- ✓ 2000 people came to our Festival this summer.
- ✓ Click [HERE](#) to find out more, and book your ticket to our 2019 event!

## Trying to provide the best support for mental health

- So many people in our society still suffer in silence from mental illness, which knows no boundaries and is no respecter of class, political affiliation or geography.
- I have seen and experienced it first hand in my own family: my own father died aged 62 when I was 20, after a traumatic life collapse from bankruptcy, alcoholism and mental illness. That is why I helped lead in Parliament, along with; Stella Creasy (LAB), Norman Lamb (Lib Dem), and Johnny Mercer (CON), the "Breathing Space" campaign and Bill. ([See More Here](#))
- The work goes on. Next year I will be continuing campaigns to end the stigma around mental health. ([See More Here](#))



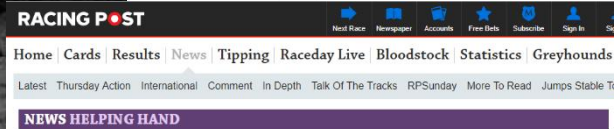


# The Bridge of Hope



- **The Bridge of Hope**

- 2018 was the 60th anniversary of my dad's triumph in the Grand National, but also tragically the 50th anniversary of his life collapse from a potent cocktail of concussion, gambling, alcohol and mental health.
- The idea behind the Bridge of Hope project is to give people who had a life collapse, a 'leg up' to a second career chance.
- With my childhood friend James, who himself had a life collapse after a bi-polar diagnosis, we have raised £400,000 to launch the Bridge of Hope with British Racing. ([See More Here](#)).
- Next year the first people will be in placements around the country and the project will growing from strength to



## MP Freeman honours Grand National-winning father's legacy with Bridge Of Hope



*'To use racing language, it will be for someone who has taken a tumble, had a fall, needs a leg up'*

George Freeman MP with the Grand National trophy his father won in 1958  
Edward Whitaker

HOME » SPORT » HORSE RACING

### National treasure finds its natural home as George Freeman MP stumps up for 1958 trophy

A fortnight ago this column included an item about the auction of the owner's gold trophy for the 1958 Grand National, won by the Arthur Freeman ridden Mr What, which had been saved from the melting pot.



Glory day: Mr What is paraded through his hometown in Ireland after winning the 1958 Grand National



Thirty lengths in front, the Irish horse Mr What, with Arthur Freeman racing in the saddle, passes the post to win the 1958 Grand National Photo: PA

This year's Grand National is special for Norfolk MP George Freeman.



- **Delivering an orderly Brexit to minimise disruption & maximise opportunity for the many not the few**

Whilst I voted to Remain in 2016 because I thought that Brexit would damage our economy and make my constituents poorer, I totally respect the Referendum result and am committed to finding a sensible Withdrawal deal. I do not support a 2nd Referendum which I believe would deepen divisions and disillusionment.

We need a Withdrawal Agreement. It would be seriously unwise to crash-out without a Withdrawal Agreement, which all the evidence shows could lead to serious disruption to the economy and public services like the NHS.

The last two and a half years since the Brexit Referendum has not been a good advertisement for UK politics. We have seen the nation hugely divided over Brexit, the Government and now Parliament bogged down in negotiations. With under 100 days to go and both the EU and PM playing hardball we are in dangerous times.

This is a time for statesmanlike calm. I would prefer to see a cross-party approach to Brexit: there are many Labour, Lib Dem and MPs from Scotland Wales and N Ireland who support Brexit and I think it would be better to have a cross-party Brexit that worked for the majority, not just the few. We need to deliver for as many of the 48% and the 52% as we can.

Above all we need to find a way to stop the deepening divisions, find a new and lasting relationship with Europe, (“in the Common Market but not in the political union” as the majority of my constituents wanted) and get back to the urgent domestic policy priorities and grievances of UK citizens.

I continue to speak out for that - on behalf of ALL my constituents. Not just the ones who voted for Brexit. My job is to represent the interests of ALL constituents. Of all parties and persuasions and none. Which I am determined to continue to do. ([See More Here](#)).

- **Recognition for my commitment to make politics more accessible**

- People from underrepresented communities are not being given a fair chance to achieve all that they can.
- The UK-based charity, The Patchwork Foundation, focuses on these communities and seeks to engage with young people in these areas.
- I was therefore delighted and honoured to receive Patchwork’s 2018 Conservative MP of the Year Certificate, and I look forward to continuing my support of this great charity going forward. ([See More Here](#))



## OUT AND ABOUT





# MAKING A DIFFERENCE!



LIVE Houses of Parliament

**GEORGE FREEMAN MP**  
Conservative

**What happens next?**

- PM will need backing of Parliament
- A vote is expected on December 12th
- European Parliament will then vote on deal



*For Outstanding Parliamentary Contribution to the Cause of Science awarded to*

*George Freeman MP*



## **ACCESSIBLE AND ACCOUNTABLE TO YOU**

I continue to try and make my work accessible with my programme **Digital Democracy**, so people who are busy and want to stay in touch easily online can do so at the press of a button:

- **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/GeorgeFreemanMidNorfolk](http://www.facebook.com/GeorgeFreemanMidNorfolk)
- **Twitter:** [https://twitter.com/Freeman\\_George](https://twitter.com/Freeman_George)
- **Website:** <http://georgefreeman.co.uk/>

## **CASEWORK AND CORRESPONDANCE**

Every week, my team and I respond to over 500 casework emails and letters from constituents— covering a vast array of problems and topics. We prioritise the most urgent and try and deal with ALL constituency correspondence within 14 days maximum.

Where a case is particularly complex, I look to arrange an appointment at one of my regular Constituency Surgeries, which I move around the main towns in Mid Norfolk. However, quite often, I am able to make enquiries on a constituent's behalf much sooner than that.

## **BRINGING MY SURGERIES TO YOU!**

As well as my regular surgeries on constituency Fridays around Mid Norfolk, I continue to hold my “Supermarket Surgeries”, “Post Office Surgeries” and “Politics in the Pub” events so that people can come and button hole me on ANY topic.



If you would like me to arrange a Supermarket or Post Office Surgery, or a Politics in the Pub! In YOUR neighbourhood - please drop me an email or call the office and I'll organise it.

As ever, this year I continued to offer opportunities for students to get work experience in both my offices, in the Constituency and Westminster. If you are interested in applying, please do not hesitate to get in contact. I'm very proud to be able to report that my two permanent staff and our current intern in the Westminster office ALL came from local schools in Mid Norfolk! #keepitreal #keepitlocal!



If YOU need my help with an issue, please do send me an email with your full name, postal address and post code – and I shall then look to see what actions I can take on your behalf.

Yours,



George Freeman MP

Member of Parliament for Mid Norfolk

Office Contact:-

Phone: 01953 600 617

Email: [george.freeman.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:george.freeman.mp@parliament.uk)



**P.S. Congratulations** to the winners of this year's Christmas card competition '*The Snow-Ball*' by Sunflower Class at Chapel Green School (pictured below). Many thanks to all those that submitted entries, it was a very strong field this year. Special thanks go to the runners up: 'Christmas Eve' by Lyra at Great Dunham Primary School, 'Merry Christmas' by Jovial Yap from Rocklands primary School and 'Joy to the World' by Evelyn Fallows from Great Ellingham Primary School.